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9 December 1986

SUBJECT: Current Situation in Suriname

The Surinamese military offensive which began on 29 November appears to be achieving its objectives, although the military assault will clearly leave the Surinamese government open to new charges of brutality. Bouterse already under criticism for 2 December decision to declare State of Emergency in Eastern Suriname, which granted the government sweeping authority. Recent acquisition of additional military hardware will enable military to expand its range of activities.

--As of 8 December, the towns of Moengo and Albina are back in the hands of the military. Both airstrips are open. Road between Paramaribo and Moengo is open, and the road continuing east to Albina is expected to be open soon. Military forced, under gunpoint, the evacuation of the hospital in Moengo in order to use it as the Field Headquarters.

--More than a dozen civilians - including women and children - have been killed in attacks against villages in Eastern Suriname. At least some of the killings reportedly were deliberate murders as opposed to accidental deaths in crossfire.

--As of 6 December, the Army's newly acquired helicopter is flying; a machine gun is mounted on each side. Helicopter flew a practice run over Moengo on 5 December, but has not been used in combat yet. No additional helicopters have been delivered. Libyan government reportedly financed one half the helicopter's cost.

Suralco remains immobilized. Homes of workers have been looted by military personnel. Surinamese citizen and manager of Suralco reportedly being held by Surinamese officials who are questioning him regarding possible collaboration with Brunswijk.

In late November exile leaders Henk Chin a Sen and Eddie Jozefzoon met with Brunswijk to review the rebel operations. Draft proclamation outlining Brunswijk's goals was written. Proclamation includes statement that transitional government following Bouterse's ouster will be comprised of civilians only, with representatives from political parties inside Suriname and resistance groups inside and outside the country. Brunswijk forces continue to suffer from lack of supplies and increasing dissension regarding role of the various resistance movements.

We understand Elliott Abrams will be traveling to Holland on 15 December to coordinate Surinamese policy with the Dutch.

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